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LETTER DATED 24 MAY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Weapons banned by the Geneva Conventions were today fired by the besieging Serbian forces into the exclusion zone within which, in theory, all heavy weapons are banned. According to the spokesman of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), Lieutenant-Colonel Gary Coward, it was his "educated military guess" that some of the shells that landed in Sarajevo's market-place, as well as surrounding areas, contained prohibited "white phosphorous".

The situation within the safe area/exclusion zone of Sarajevo has managed to climb another level of the mound of absurd logic and broken promises in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While within this safe area/exclusion zone established by Security Council resolutions, the population is to be protected against shelling by any heavy weapons; now all heavy weapons, including those banned by the Geneva Conventions, are turned with impunity and without response upon the population of Sarajevo. These actions mock the rule of law, the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It is the duty of the Security Council and the relevant regional organizations to save their credibility and honour. However, it is once again Bosnian civilians who pay the heaviest price. It appears that within an exclusion zone against heavy weapons, internationally banned weapons are being tested against a city and its inhabitants, for the entire world to watch.

This absurd situation cannot be rationalized by United Nations spokesmen in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina nor those in authority in New York through excuses for inaction, including the latest leap of logic: that the fight around Sarajevo is evenly matched and, therefore, the United Nations and NATO need not act. This is not an issue of military confrontation but rather the targeting of civilians by all means available, including banned weapons. By the latter logic (of some United Nations functionaries), the murder of innocent civilians by the Nazis was of no concern because the Allied Forces were more than an adequate match for the Nazi military forces.

Today, three more civilians were pruned from the tree of life in Sarajevo, and the mound of absurd logic engulfs new victims.

Please, demand the necessary steps to put an end to this human pruning.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative